

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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R 071703Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9449
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ELAB, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: MORE BOMBS IN LISBON

1. MORE BOMBS IN LISBON: SEVERAL BOMBS EXPLODED DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS DEC 6 ON THE COMMUTER RAIL LINES LINKING LISBON WITH THE SUBURBS OF CASCAS AND SINTRA. DAMAGES INTERRUPTED SERVICES ON THE TWO HEAVILY-USED LINES DURING THE MORNING RUSH HOUR. THOUSANDS OF COMMUTERS WERE INCONVENIENCED. THE RESULT WAS A MONUMENTAL TRAFFIC JAM ON THE ROADS LEADING TO LISBON MADE WORSE BY A STEADY DRIZZLE THROUGHOUT THE DAY. SERVICE WAS RESTORED TO ALMOST NORMAL BY EARLY AFTERNOON. PRIME MINISTER SOARES HAS PLEDGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO APPREHEND THOSE RESPONSIBLE AND END SUCH ACTS OF TERRORISM. THUS FAR, NO ONE HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EXPLOSIONS.

2. GOVERNMENT MODIFIES FORCED SAVINGS PLAN: IN AN
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OBVIOUS EFFORT TO MAKE ITS PROPOSAL MORE SATISFACTORY TO THE OPPOSITE PARTIES, THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON DEC 6

DECIDED TO MODIFY ITS FORCED SAVINGS PLAN. THE AMOUNT OF THE "CHRISTMAS BONUS" SUBJECT TO PAYMENT IN TREASURY BONDS WILL BE REDUCED; THE PROCEEDS OF THE FORCED SAVINGS EFFORT WILL BE EARMARKED FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND FOR USE IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGIONS OF THE AZORES AND MADEIRA.

3. ANOTHER SOCIALIST SUSPENDED: SOCIALIST PARTY OFFICIALS ON DEC 6 CONFIRMED THE SUSPENSION OF ANOTHER DISSIDENT PARTY LEFTWINGER--THE SIXTH TO DATE. THE LATEST TO BE DISCIPLINED IS MARIA DA PAZ LIMA, PRESIDENT OF THE LISBON JOURNALIST UNION. HER OFFENSE: SIGNING A CIRCULAR, IN THE NAME OF THE PROVISIONAL EXECUTIVE OF THE PS LISBON LABOR COMMITTEE, INVITING SOCIALISTS TO A DEC 4 MEETING TO PROTEST SUSPENSION OF OTHER PS LEFTWINGERS. THE CIRCULAR ASSERTED THAT THE SUSPENSIONS WERE PART OF A CONSPIRACY AGAINST FORMER AGRICULTURE MINISTER LOPES CARDOSO. SOCIALIST PARTY SPOKESMAN JAIME GAMA, WHEN ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE LATEST SUSPENSION, SAID: "IN MY VIEW, IT IS PART OF A DIVISIONIST MANEUVER DIRECTED AGAINST THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND CONSEQUENTLY AGAINST THE SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT AND PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY."

4. COMMENT: THE DAY'S EVENTS PROVIDED A CROSS SECTION OF SOME OF THE PRESSING CONCERNS OF THE SOARES GOVERNMENT. THE BOMB EXPLOSIONS WILL FEED NAGGING PUBLIC UNEASINESS AT THE AUTHORITIES' INABILITY TO END SUCH ACTS OF TERRORISM. THE MODIFICATION OF THE FORCED SAVING PLAN IS A REMINDER THAT AUSTERITY MEASURES MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHAT THE CURRENT POLITICAL MARKET WILL BEAR. THE SUSPENSION OF ANOTHER SOCIALIST ACTIVIST REFLECTS CONTINUING STRAINS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT PARTY.
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